

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest R. Watrous
101 Quaker Farm Road
Mystic, CT 06355

February 18, 2013

Disabilities Network of Eastern CT, Inc.
19 Ohio Avenue
Norwich, CT 06360

To Whom It May Concern:

We have recently become aware that there may be cuts to the budget that could affect the Center for Independent Living in the state of Connecticut, specifically DNEC.

I, Deborah Watrous, am writing at this time to ask that the funding of DNEC not be cut.

My husband, Ernest, is diagnosed with Primary Progressive MS. He is fully disabled and paralyzed from the ribs down. I care for him full time. He requires the use of an electric wheelchair, electric bed, etc. We live on a very fixed income.

In February-March 2009 Ernest was hospitalized for MS complications. It became necessary, at that time, for a ramp to be added to our home in order to safely allow for Ernest to enter and leave the house. During the time it took to approve and build the ramp, Ernest stayed at a nursing center.

It was at this nursing center that we first met a representative from DNEC. She, Julie, informed us of the help available through DNEC toward the building of the ramp. Without the help of DNEC, the ramp could not be built and Ernest could not come home.

In October 2012 I contacted DNEC once again and spoke with representative Sharon Heddle. The floor of the ramp was delaminating in numerous areas and was creating a potentially unsafe situation. The electric wheelchair had gone through the floor in one area at the bottom of the ramp creating a 12"x12" hole.

DNEC representative Sharon Heddle came to our home, assessed the situation, and helped us fill out the necessary paperwork. The estimate for repairs was \$651.86. The labor was donated. Within a short while, the necessary funding for materials was approved and we were able to make the necessary repairs to the ramp.

Without the funding help from DNEC, we could not make the necessary repairs and Ernest could no longer stay at home. We would like to respectfully request that funding to DNEC not be cut. DNEC provides a much-needed service to those who are trying to live as independently as possible. To cut DNEC funds, in our opinion, would deny many this option and create extra expense to the state of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

Ernest and Deborah Watrous